

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

APPLICATION NO. TBD	FILING DATE 17 November 2003	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR Salvatore J. Puleo Sr.	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. NATREE 3.1-004US
			EXAMINER TBD
Preliminary Amendment Express Mail No. EV 212210041 US			ART UNIT TBD
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**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

In the Claims, please cancel claims 1-11 and add claims 12-27 as provided below:

12. (New) A stand comprising:

a support system for supporting said stand;

a shell coupled to said support system, said shell including an inner volume for housing electrical components; and

a cover disposed atop said shell, said cover including an inner volume in contact with said inner volume of said shell, said cover extending beyond a lateral surface of said shell such that said cover has at least one hole disposed on a downward-facing surface of said cover, said hole providing ventilation between said inner volume of said shell through said inner volume of said cover and out to an outside environment, said cover including a receptacle configured to hold a fiber-optic decoration.

13. (New) The stand according to claim 12 further comprising:

an access door disposed on said shell for accessing said electrical components within said inner volume of said shell.

14. (New) The stand according to claim 13 wherein said access door further includes a safety mechanism that prevents said access door from being opened when electrical power is applied to said electrical components.

15. (New) The stand according to claim 14 wherein said safety mechanism is an electrical access opening for accepting an electrical plug, said access door being prevented

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from opening to enable access to said electrical components when said electrical plug is inserted into said electrical access opening.

16. (New) The stand according to claim 14 wherein said safety mechanism is an electrical connector for accepting an electrical plug, said access door being prevented from opening to enable access to said electrical equipment when said electrical plug is inserted into said electrical connector.

17. (New) The stand according to claim 14 wherein said safety mechanism is an electrical lock that locks said access door, said access door being prevented from opening to enable access to said electrical equipment when power is applied to said electrical components.

18. (New) The stand according to claim 14 wherein said safety mechanism is an actuating switch that disconnects power to said electrical components when said access door is opened.

19. (New) A stand for holding a fiber-optic decoration comprising:  
an access door disposed on said stand for accessing electrical components within an inner volume of said stand.

20. (New) The stand according to claim 19 wherein said access door further includes a safety mechanism that prevents said access door from being opened when electrical power is applied to said electrical components.

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21. (New) The stand according to claim 19 wherein said safety mechanism is an electrical access opening for accepting an electrical plug, said access door being prevented from opening to enable access to said electrical components when said electrical plug is inserted into said electrical access opening.

22. (New) The stand according to claim 19 wherein said safety mechanism is an electrical connector for accepting an electrical plug, said access door being prevented from opening to enable access to said electrical equipment when said electrical plug is inserted into said electrical connector.

23. (New) The stand according to claim 19 wherein said safety mechanism is an electrical lock that locks said access door, said access door being prevented from opening to enable access to said electrical equipment when power is applied to said electrical components.

24. (New) The stand according to claim 19 wherein said safety mechanism is an actuating switch that disconnects power to said electrical components when said access door is opened.

25. (New) A holder for mounting electrical components used within a decorative lighting system comprising:  
  
a safety mechanism that prevents said holder from being accessed within said decorative lighting system when electrical power is applied to said electrical components.

26 (New) The holder according to claim 25 wherein said safety mechanism includes an electrical lock that is activated when power is applied to said electrical components.

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27. (New) The holder according to claim 25 wherein said safety mechanism is an actuating switch that disconnects power to said electrical components when said actuating switch is released.